

The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

Service Score Results: Baseline

SPEP™ ID and Time: 272-T01

Agency Name: George Junior Republic
Program Name: All Programs
Service Name: Behavior Management Through Adventure
Cohort Total: 46 Amount of Service/45 Risk Level
Timeframe of Selected Cohort: All delinquent youth who began this service on/after July 1, 2018 and ended this service on/before June 30, 2019
Referral County(s): Allegheny; Berks; Bucks; Butler; Chester; Clarion; Clinton; Dauphin; Delaware; Erie; Jefferson; Lehigh; Lycoming; McKean; Monroe; Montgomery; Washington; & Westmoreland
Date(s) of Interview(s): February 18, 2020
Lead County: Montgomery
Probation Representative(s): Lisa Fetzer
EPIS Representative: Kevin Perluke

Description of Service:

George Junior Republic (GJR) was established in 1909 as a private, nonprofit residential treatment community for disadvantaged youth by philanthropist William Ruben George. The organization was driven by his dream of creating an environment where youth would receive the guidance, education and skills needed to become productive citizens in society. GJR's goal is to "integrate appropriate behaviors into a youth's daily routine in order for the youth to be successfully discharged back into the community setting." GJR provides out-of-home services for dependent and delinquent youth from Pennsylvania and other states across the country. Delinquent and dependent kids are mixed throughout the cottages. Dozens of buildings are on the campus, and each is licensed separately. There are several different levels of care within the GJR residential program: Intensive Supervision Units (ISU); Special Needs Units and Special Needs RTF (SN); General Residential Program; 90 Day; Licensed Drug & Alcohol Treatment Unit; Diagnostic Unit; and Shelter Care.

Behavior Management Through Adventure (BMTA): GJR has a ropes course that is certified by the Association of Experiential Education and used for adventure-based counseling. Units are assigned a BMTA group once per week; weekly sessions last between 90 and 120 minutes. The group cycle runs between 8 and 10 weeks. BMTA is designed to teach kids to take control of their environment. BMTA focuses on teaching youth empowerment strategies to increase problem-solving; help youth change feelings, thinking, and social behaviors; reduce dysfunctional behaviors; improve functional life behaviors; and avoid re-arrest. The group participates in adventure challenges to allow trust to develop within the group. Over time, these exercises are used to reinforce skills such as patience, listening, seeing another's point of view, leading, following, planning, and experiencing the consequences of actions. BMTA's goal is to enable youth to use these skills in dealing with problem behaviors, and members of the group, as well as facilitators, can call group meetings at any time to acknowledge positive actions or address problems.

The four characteristics of a service found to be the most strongly related to reducing recidivism:

1. SPEP™ Service Type: Challenge Programs

Based on the meta-analysis, is there a qualifying supplemental service? Yes

If so, what is the Service Type? Group Counseling

Was the supplemental service provided? Yes Total Points Possible for this Service Type: 20

Total Points Received: 20 Total Points Possible: 35

2. Quality of Service: Research has shown that programs that deliver service with high quality are more likely to have a positive impact on recidivism reduction. Monitoring of quality is defined by existence of written protocol, staff training, staff supervision, and how drift from service delivery is addressed.

Total Points Received: 20 Total Points Possible: 20

3. Amount of Service: Score was derived by calculating the total number of weeks and hours received by each youth in the service. The amount of service is measured by the target amounts of service for the SPEP™ service categorization. Each SPEP™ service type has varying amounts of duration and contact hours. Youth should receive the targeted amounts to have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction.

Points received for Duration or Number of Weeks: 8

Points received for Contact Hours or Number of Hours: 0

Total Points Received: 8 **Total Points Possible:** 20

4. Youth Risk Level: The risk level score is compiled by calculating the total % of youth that score above low risk, and the total % of youth who score above moderate risk to reoffend based on the results of the YLS.

43 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High, Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 12 points

20 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 13 points

Total Points Received: 25 **Total Points Possible:** 25

Basic SPEP™ Score: 73 total points received out of 100 points. Compares service to any other type of SPEP™ therapeutic service. (e.g. individual counseling compared to cognitive behavioral therapy, social skills training, mentoring, etc.)

Note: Services with scores greater than or equal to 50 show the service is having a positive impact on recidivism reduction.

Program Optimization Percentage: 86% This percentage compares the service to the same service types found in the research. (e.g. individual counseling compared to all other individual counseling services included in the research.)

The SPEP™ and Performance Improvement

The intended use of the SPEP™ is to optimize the effectiveness of reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders. Recommendations for performance improvement are included in the service Feedback Report, and these recommendations are the focus of the Performance Improvement Plan, a shared responsibility of the service provider and the juvenile probation department.

1. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery:

a. Written Protocol:

- i. Ensure the YLS is referenced when determining which youth is appropriate for the service.
- ii. Include revision date to manual when its updated.

b. Staff Training:

- i. Ensure that predetermined timeframes are set for booster trainings.

c. Staff Supervision:

- i. Incorporate Adventure Based Observation form or generic fidelity observation form for monitoring service delivery.
- ii. Ensure that monitoring occurs at predetermined timeframes.
- iii. Encompass BMTA service delivery into performance evaluations.

d. Organizational Response to Drift:

- i. Enhance policy to a more specific if-then approach.
- ii. Formalize a data collection process to capture the fidelity and quality of service delivery.
- iii. Ensure that the data which is collected is used to adapt or improve service delivery.

2. Regarding Amount of Service:

- a. Establish ways to enhance amount of service to reach the targeted amounts of 4 weeks and 60 hours.

3. Regarding Risk Level of Youth Served:

- a. Maintain collaboration with referral JPO to consider the appropriate risk level for each youth.